

## 2 Samuel 16:1-14 - Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Last week we left David and his loyal followers fleeing Jerusalem after hearing that Absalom, David's son was on his way there.
- This because David didn't want innocent lives lost knowing full well it would be a blood bath were David to stay in Jerusalem.
- As we pick it up now in chapter 16, David is on the run, with several hundred people, as he awaits word concerning Absalom.

1 When David was a little past the top of the mountain, there was Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth, who met him with a couple of saddled donkeys, and on them two hundred loaves of bread, one hundred clusters of raisins, one hundred summer fruits, and a skin of wine. 2 And the king said to Ziba, "What do you mean to do with these?" So Ziba said, "The donkeys are for the king's household to ride on, the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat, and the wine for those who are faint in the wilderness to drink." 3 Then the king said, "And where is your master's son?" And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, 'Today the house of Israel will restore the kingdom of my father to me.' " 4 So the king said to Ziba, "Here, all that belongs to Mephibosheth is yours." And Ziba said, "I humbly bow before you, that I may find favor in your sight, my lord, O king!"

- If Ziba and Mephibosheth sound familiar, it's because we were first introduced to these two men when we were in 2 Samuel 9.
- Both were descendants of Saul, however, it was Mephibosheth who was the son of Jonathan, David's loyal and trusted friend.
- David knew of them when he sought out those left of the house of Saul that he might show them kindness according to his vow.

- Ziba comes to David first, then, tells him about Mephibosheth who was crippled when he was rushed to safety at the age of 5.
- Then, when Mephibosheth is brought to David, he makes Ziba Mephibosheth's servant and gives him the inheritance of Saul.
- In addition to this, David tells him that he will eat at his table and be like one of the king's sons, which I believe angered Ziba.

- Actually, it may be for this very reason that Ziba is lying to David concerning Mephibosheth so as to get the inheritance himself.
- We're told in verse four his deception was met with success when David tells him all that belonged to Mephibosheth is now his.
- Sadly, David is in such an emotional state of mind, that he is not really thinking clearly, as this will prove to be a huge mistake.

2 Samuel 19:24-30 (NKJV) — 24 Now Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king. And he had not cared for his feet, nor trimmed his mustache, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he returned in peace. 25 So it was, when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, "Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?" 26 And he answered, "My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, 'I will saddle a donkey for myself, that I may ride on it and go to the king,' because your servant is lame. 27 And he has slandered your servant to my lord the king, but my lord the king is like the angel of God. Therefore do what is good in your eyes. 28 For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king. Yet you set your servant among those who eat at your own table. Therefore what right have I still to cry out anymore to the king?" 29 So the king said to him, "Why do you speak anymore of your matters? I have said, 'You and Ziba divide the land.' " 30 Then Mephibosheth said to the king, "Rather, let him take it all, inasmuch as my lord the king has come back in peace to his own house."

- This clearly proves that Ziba was lying and Mephibosheth was telling the truth. The problem is, David doesn't see it in this crisis.

G. Campbell Morgan, [Ziba] "was utterly despicable, and the more so because at the moment the sorrow he brought to the heart of David was his feeling that his kindness toward Mephibosheth was ill requited."

5 Now when King David came to Bahurim, there was a man from the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei the son of Gera, coming from there. He came out, cursing continuously as he came. 6 And he threw stones at David and at all the servants of King David. And all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. 7 Also Shimei said thus when he cursed: "Come out! Come out! You bloodthirsty man, you rogue! 8 The LORD has brought upon you all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose place you have reigned; and the LORD has delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom your son. So now you are caught in your own evil, because you are a bloodthirsty man!"

- What Shimei does here is wrong on every level for a number of reasons not the least of which is that he falsely accuses David.
- David spared Saul's life not wanting to raise his hand against the Lord's anointed, and showed kindness to the house of Saul.
- Another reason this is wrong is because God forbid the cursing of a ruler of the people as a built in protection for His leaders.

Exodus 22:28 (NKJV) "You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people."

- Be that as it may, it's sad to say that Shimei is alive and well today in cursing and falsely accusing those in leadership positions.
- You'll know a Shimei when you see on because they are cowards that pile on when a man is down, and rejoice when they fail.
- So much so that Shimei's become vitriolic in their false accusations against those whom they perceive God to also be against.

Charles Spurgeon - "At the moment when grief had made poor David most sensitive, the foul mouth of Shimei was opened to curse him. It is an evidence of a very cruel disposition when those who need pity are singled out for abuse. It is reckoned a very cowardly thing to strike a man when he is down, and Shimei was just such a coward. All the while that David prospered we hear nothing of Shimei; but as our trials show us who are our friends, so do they reveal our enemies."

9 Then Abishai the son of Zeruiah said to the king, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Please, let me go over and take off his head!" 10 But the king said, "What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? So let him curse, because the LORD has said to him, 'Curse David.' Who then shall say, 'Why have you done so?'" 11 And David said to Abishai and all his servants, "See how my son who came from my own body seeks my life. How much more now may this Benjamite? Let him alone, and let him curse; for so the LORD has ordered him. 12 It may be that the LORD will look on my affliction, and that the LORD will repay me with good for his cursing this day." 13 And as David and his men went along the road, Shimei went along the hillside opposite him and cursed as he went, threw stones at him and kicked up dust. 14 Now the king and all the people who were with him became weary; so they refreshed themselves there.

- To David's credit, he makes the right decision, which is also the hard decision, in spite of all that is now coming against him.
- It would have been so easy for David to react to Shimei and allow Abishai to instantly silence Shimei by taking off his head.
- However, David knows that were he do so, he would in fact become the very bloodthirsty killer that Shimei is accusing him of.

Charles Spurgeon - "David could take this fellow's head off and that in a moment, and yet he said, 'Let him alone. Let him curse.' And this makes a splendid example. If you can revenge yourself, DON'T. If you could do it as easily as open your hand, keep it shut. If one bitter word could end the argument, ask for grace to spare that bitter word."

- To me, this begs the question of how it is that David was able to restrain himself from that, which could have been so very easy.
- I would suggest that there are several reasons for this, and it's in those reasons that we find our take away from this passage.
- What follows are -- reasons that, like David, we can respond to the Shimei's in our life, who constantly hurl attacks against us.

- First, David didn't listen to the advise from a loyal friend, who wanted nothing more than to defend him by silencing the accuser.
- David was keenly aware that Abishai's judgment was severely impaired by virtue of his unflinching loyalty to David as his king.
- Though extremely difficult, sometimes it's best to refrain when someone curses, insults and falsely accusing someone you love.

- Second, David didn't give in to the impulse of the moment because he knew that doing so would validate Shimei's accusations.
- It's been my own personal experience the enemy is always trying to bait us in order to engage us in a battle we're sure to lose.
- He does this by drawing us out of the spiritual arena into the carnal arena where we are on his turf so we don't stand a chance.

- Third, David knew that God could silence Shimei in a split second if He wanted to, and surmised that God's hand was in this.
- This is perhaps one of the most important lessons to learn when we're the recipient of curses and insults from our own Shimei.
- Simply put, like David, we would do well to give the Holy Spirit elbowroom, as it were, and allow the hand of God to work in it.

Charles Spurgeon - "How humbly did David ...refuse to avenge himself upon the instrumental which smote him so furiously. Nothing helps us to bear a provocation so well as humbly seeing the hand of God in it..."

- Fourth, David had the peace of God because he knew that he was innocent before God, which is why he put his trust in God.
- It's been said that there's some truth in every criticism, and if there was any truth to what Shimei said it was that God allowed it.
- However, Shimei is wrong in that God didn't allow Absalom to rebel against his father because he took the throne from Saul.

G. Campbell Morgan - "As we thus follow David through these days of humiliation and shame ... we nevertheless understand more perfectly that he was indeed a man after God's own heart." ... "This is radiant illustration of the deep and inward peace given to any man who is living in fellowship with God in motive and desire."

- Fifth, David was able to both put and keep this in its proper perspective and it's evidenced by what David says in verse eleven.
- More specifically, that his own flesh and blood Absalom was the real problem and not this Abishai who's a descendant of Saul.
- This speaks to how prone we are to major on the minor at the expense of the major, which David could have very easily done.

- Sixth, David believed that God would somehow work all of this cursing out for his good, which is what we see in verse twelve.
- He's not necessarily expecting it, he's by faith anticipating it when he says, "It may be that the Lord will look on my affliction."
- It's so important we remember promises like Romans 8:28 because Shimei's have a way of making us think it doesn't apply.

Charles Spurgeon - "David ...well said in the Psalms, 'I opened not my mouth because thou didst it.' He also consoled himself with the belief that the Lord would not always chide him, but would in due time return and comfort him. Nothing brings God to His children's rescue like the reviling's of their enemies. Fathers cannot bear to hear their dear ones abused."

- Seventh, David yet again has completely surrendered to the Lord in his brokenness, and in so doing, gets right back on track.
- We're told in verse fourteen that David and all of who were with him had become weary so they refreshed themselves there.
- This as Shimei was alongside the opposite hillside continuing to curse, throw stones, and even kick up dust as they did this.

In his book A Tale of Three Kings, Gene Edwards put these words into the mouth of David: "The throne is not mine. Not to have, not to take, not to protect, and not to keep. The throne is the LORD'S." It was that kind of heart that kept David on-track through such a difficult time and enabled him to even be refreshed.